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WEDDING



THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED
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By the Same Author

THE LIVING UNIVERSE
MODERN MYSTICS
THE REIGN OF GOD
DAWN IN INDIA
WONDERS OF THE HIMALAYA
THE COMING COUNTRY
THE HEART OF A CONTINENT
THE SUM OF THINGS
VITAL RELIGION

WEDDING

By

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LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

First Edition .

1942

Made and Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd , Frome and London

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INTRODUCTION

AT a week-end Conference of the World Congress of Faiths held at Downe House, near Newbury in April, 1941, one of the speakers with considerable experience of propagating new ideas urged that it was essential that any such ideas should first be threshed out with great thoroughness by a quite small body of experts. From that tiny group there would then issue an influence with real vitality in it. It would be vital enough to act like leaven upon the whole. Christianity itself was so started, and so were Buddhism and Islam, it was observed.

In subsequent discussion both at Downe House and at the Oxford Annual Meeting in June it was agreed that for the task of World-Reconstruction, which was the subject of this Conference, the tiny group, or living cell ought to be the home. Through millions of homes in every country the New World Order would have to be raised.

Then arose the question how these homes themselves should be made. That they should be religious we of the World Congress of Faiths were naturally agreed. But how should parents be trained to make a religious home? If the home was to be the basic unit the parents, and especially the mother, would have to be its inner nucleus. How were these parents of the future to be educated in fatherhood and motherhood? That was the question. And it soon became clear that both the man and the woman would have to be most carefully trained in the art of wedding before ever they became husband and wife. So it is to impress the need for such training that this little book has been written.

But before writing it I consulted a member of our Congress (Lady Lees, of South Lytchett Manor), who was

present at the Conference and who, as the mother of a large family and the founder and director of a school for boys and girls which grew out of it, has had, with her husband, great experience in religious home-making. And it is mainly upon her advice that this book has developed.

Her first counsel was to consult the Alliance of Honour. To them therefore I went. And from the various publications which they recommended I made one most satisfactory discovery. Already, ten years ago, the Heads of both the Church of Rome and the Church of England had officially recognised that boys and girls must be trained for marriage. Both Churches had seen that if they were to exact a vow of lifelong fidelity to the marriage union they must first teach the young couple how to live the married life. It was most encouraging to discover this. But it is amazing to think that the Christian Church has taken nearly two thousand years to learn this very obvious lesson and has not even yet fully acted on it. And it is horrible to reflect on the agony of soul and body that millions of husbands and wives have suffered simply from ignorance of the science and art of wedding, and the spiritual significance of marriage. Horrible, too, is it to think of the consequences of their unhappiness which has fallen upon countless children of such parents.

Now, however, that the necessity of training for marriage is officially recognised by the leaders of the Churches we laymen may well press forward. And in this book my aim has been to show the beauty of the married life which a man and woman thus trained for wedding may lead. I would impress upon every man, woman, and child the *holiness* of the Holy State of Matrimony. I would urge that if that sense of the sanctity of marriage be preserved undimmed throughout the married life, and

only deepened by its vicissitudes, then the happiness of the honeymoon will be but as moonlight unto sunlight in comparison with the blissfulness to be. And my belief is that it is fathers and mothers who enjoy such happiness who will be the best centres for the homes of the future. They will be the fittest nuclei for the living cells which will form the basic units of the New World Order, and in their millions be the leaven which will leaven the whole.

CHAPTER I

PRIMITIVE PEOPLES AND WEDDING

God means men to mate. Male and female created He them. And the happiness each gives the other is a sure sign that marriage is of God. It is, indeed, because of the happiness the one can bring to the other that not only men and women, but male and female in birds, animals, and insects seek each other out and mate. And so thrilled with happiness are they that they feel lifted on to a higher plane of living and would fain live there for ever. But herein lies the great problem before humanity. How can man and woman retain for ever the happiness which first brought them together?

Unlike most insects the human species is very young. Unlike ants and bees which have been in existence for many millions of years, and have settled down in life, the human species is only about one million years old and is as yet only feeling its way towards a settled relationship between man and woman. In a process of trial and error it is making many mistakes. But it is quite definitely aiming at some system whereby a man and woman once married will remain married. Let us examine these efforts.

First we may study marriage customs as they exist among communities of the simplest kind. For we can then see wedding in its most rudimentary stage. Even primitive peoples, though very free and easy in their matrimonial arrangements, frown on completely promiscuous intercourse between the sexes and recognise marriage. It was my lot when in India to have some business with a forest people called the Baiga, and I will take them as affording an example of primitive forms of marriage both because of this acquaintance with

them and because their habits and customs have been minutely described in a book called *The Baiga*,¹ by Verrier Elwin, who for six years had lived among them and been regarded by them as their Big Brother on account of his deep affection for them

Celibacy is unheard of, continence is never practised. And it is considered wholly impossible for anyone to live without a mate. That is a simple law of nature that must be obeyed. Yet most of the Baiga marriages are based on love and not on sheer lust. Women have great freedom and may go about alone. And it is not considered improper for the girl to take the lead in the erotic approach. She chooses her own husband and may change him at will. From childhood both man and woman have grown up free and unrestrained. Their sexual consciousness has developed very early. Their parents have just laughed tolerantly when they have seen them indulging in erotic play.

The Baiga, says Elwin, himself a poet, have the advantage of a perfect setting for their romances. The forest, the sweet forest, the forest of delight, is the Baiga's natural home. What lover could fail to be inspired by its remoteness, the sweet smell of flowers, the murmuring of the wind in uncounted trees? The girl always has an excuse to go and fetch water from the well or a stream. It is a convention that she may go alone. And in simple songs youth and maiden express the joy of lovers.

Most of these lovers' meetings result in only temporary unions. But it is significant that Elwin is able to record that nearly every Baiga seems to have had one or two experiences of a deeper character. "One girl has above all others caught and held his imagination, one girl has filled his memory so that for years after his body will quiver as he thinks of her. And these are the

¹ John Murray, 1939

experiences which have left their mark upon the songs " The singer would make love lasting and eternal.

When there is such freedom of intercourse between men and women, boys and girls, we might suppose that little importance would be attached to such a formality as marriage. Yet Elwin tells us that as a matter of fact the Baiga do regard marriage as very important. So we see here the first beginnings of the recognition by mankind that the union of man and woman does need some degree of permanence. Before marriage both boy and girl may have had complete sexual intercourse, either with each other or with other boys and girls. And even the marriage itself is not the beginning of either a permanent or an exclusive relationship, for after the marriage the husband may at any time marry another woman and the wife may run away to someone else. Yet there is in these Baiga marriages just the beginning of wedded stability. It licenses the woman to bear children and so makes a respectable woman of her. And it is important to the men because permanent association with a woman is impossible without marriage. Moreover, it is a fact that even now many Baiga have experienced the joys of a permanent and more or less exclusive relationship.

There is this tendency to permanency in union. And there is no prostitution. Though the love may not last long it is from love alone that the Baiga men and women unite; and when love ceases they part.

How far is this growing tendency towards permanence in the union of a man and a woman due to religion? That is now the interesting point. Is there yet the germ of a recognition of the connection between love and religion? Have they any glimmering that the joy of marriage and the joy of religion are one—that they both derive from the same source, namely, God? What is their conception of God?

The Baiga worship many gods and they divide supernatural beings into gods who are usually benevolent and into spirits who are usually hostile to men. Yet there is one above all others to whom they pay special respect. He is Bhagavan, the Creator. He, it is, who settled the Baiga in the jungle, who gave them seed, who provided the tribe with taboos that would maintain its integrity and prestige. He is benevolent, and all birth and death is in his hands. He lives "far away," but somewhere on the earth that he has created for his pleasure. There he cares for the souls of those who come to him, punishing the worst, while sending the rest back to earth to be born again.

But magic is of enormous importance in the life of the Baiga. "The magician," says Elwin, "stands between mankind and all the malignant forces of nature and supernatural." He has to fight disease and death, stimulate the growth of crops, and protect them from hail, storm, and jungle pig. And he has to make the course of love run smoothly. But it cannot be said that as yet primitive men, as represented by the Baiga, have any clear sense of the connection of love with religion. The growing tendency towards permanence in the union of a man and a woman is apparently not due to religion. We shall have to wait for a later stage before that can be recognised. Yet it is abundantly evident that even the most primitive people find their greatest joy in courting and wedding and long for that happiness to last for ever. That the newly married couple may "live happily ever after" is an old, old, longing of mankind.

In the sophisticated society of Western Civilisation this joy in mating is often belittled and derided. I would rather emphasise it as the most important thing in life. And I would regard it as the most important because, as I will show in the concluding chapter, it is capable of

being made the most holy thing in life as leading straight to that heaven from whence it came and which it brings with it down to earth again

When we look round the world we find young men and maidens of every race, the most cultured and the most savage, and in every race among high and low, rich and poor alike, experiencing the same joy in courtship and marriage. And throughout the twenty-four hours of each day, somewhere or other men and women are courting each other, marrying, and experiencing the joy of wedding. We note, further, that it is not only men and women who are finding this high happiness, but that males and females throughout the whole animal world, including birds, butterflies, bees, and every other insect, are seeking their mates, courting and finding the ecstasy of union with the one of their choice.

Also we observe that nothing has a deeper and more universal appeal to men and women of every age than hearing of this joy of courtship. The greatest poets in all ages, in every country, and of every religion sing of it. It is the main theme of novels and stories in every language. Great operas are composed round it. Even in the cinema producers find that to attract the largest audience the film must have a "love interest." And that star has the greatest success who can best sing a simple love-song. Deanna Durbin is an example, and on the concert platform, Gracie Fields. Harry Lauder singing Annie Laurie is another example. It is the same with the most primitive peoples. All have their love-songs and dances. Take these songs of the Baiga.

CHAPTER II

LOVE-SONGS AND MOTHER-LOVE

A GROUP of Baiga by the fire, says Elwin, often suddenly burst out singing. And it is forest songs that they sing. Young lovers sing them to each other and many a proposal has been made and elopement arranged in verse. It is always a delight, he says, to hear these love-songs. From the depths of the forest comes a song, fresh and thrilling, with a lilt, a joy, an excitement that never stales. Here is one.—

- GIRL Come take your axe and we'll go to the jungle
 Listen to my songs with your left ear
- BOY I've come to the jungle for jamun berries
 O girl, they say that you are a teacher of songs
- GIRL I've come to the jungle to find Kerela
 Tell me why you are sad, O friend
- BOY . I've come to the jungle for kameran fruit
 How I long for you! Come and sit with me
- GIRL I've come to the jungle to gather thorns
 I weep with desire for a faithful lover
- BOY I've come to the jungle to kill a wood-pigeon
 My love, I will leave everything for you
- GIRL Look, on that dry tree the monkeys are sitting
 O little brother, they will suspect us
- BOY I've come to the jungle to dig for roots
 Don't be frightened, I'll pay a bullock for you
- GIRL O the mango in the valley and the creeper on the
 hill
 O love, come to me and I will hide you in my dress
- BOY I've come to the jungle to gather leaves
 It is in our youth we must take delight
- GIRL . O my love, come drink some water and enjoy
 me
 As much as anyone could enjoy in all their lifetime
- BOY I've come to the jungle to kill a porcupine
 We'll sleep together by the mango tree
 Hold me so close that no air can pass between us

Here we get an impression of love welling up from the very fountain-spring of life with the flavour of Nature fresh on it. Love in touch with the trees and the fruits and the flowers and the animals. And in like manner it gushes forth, strong and sweet in every land. There is not a race or country that has not its love-songs. And the more the people sing them the healthier and wholesomer will their life be.

Here, for instance, is another love-song—this one of a peasant people

I am my beloved's,
And his desire is towards me
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field ,
Let us lodge in the villages
Let us get up early in the vineyard ,
Let us see if the vine flourish'd, whether tender grapes appear,
And the pomegranates bud forth
There will I give thee my love
The mandrakes give a smell,
And at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruit, new and old,
Which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved
O that thou wert as my brother,
That sucked the breasts of my mother !
When I should seek thee without, I would kiss thee ,
Yea, I should not be despised
I would lead thee and bring thee into my mother's house,
Who would instruct me
I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine
Of the juice of my pomegranate
His left hand should be under my head,
And his right hand should embrace me
I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
That ye stir not up, nor awake my love,
Until he please

Though a love-song pure and simple, it is rightly regarded as sacred and included within The Holy Bible in " the Song of Songs which is Solomon's."

When we come to our own land and to Shakespeare, something of the primal simplicity is lost, but love is now clearly recognised as divine. "From Juliet to Miranda and Queen Katherine," says Mr Wilson Knight,¹ the latest interpreter of Shakespeare, "Shakespeare's heroines are crowned and glorified beyond all other ideals but the divine. Indeed, in Shakespeare this love blends into the Divine, as in Dante. The loved one is an 'angel,' the place of love 'paradise,' its home 'eternity'."

Eternity was in our lips and eyes,
Bliss in our brows' bent none our parts so poor,
But was a race of heaven

Antony and Cleopatra

Let thee not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove

O no ! it is an ever fixed mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken ,
It is the star to every wandering bark
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ,
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out ev'n to the edge of doom

If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved

Sonnets

We are moving in the direction of the union of Love and Religion. But not yet are they truly wedded. Not yet has poetry wedded the Love of man and woman for one another with their Love of God. Not yet have we a Love-Song which is a Hymn, or a Hymn which is a Love-Song.

¹ *The Christian Renaissance*, by G Wilson Knight, Macmillan & Co

That we still await. But when it arrives who will be able to resist its appeal? A Love-Song with the added Joy of Religion behind it . who would be able to hear it unmoved? Religion with all the tenderness of the Love of man for woman to sweeten it : who could withstand it? And if such a Love-Hymn were danced as well as sung who would not be swept off his feet?

We English might compose a Love-Song which was also a Hymn. And we might sing it And no people could compose a sweeter or sing it more sweetly But would we ever be able to dance it? For a Sacred Love-Song which would be danced as well as sung we may have to look to India Or perhaps to Russia The Russians are by nature profoundly religious. They are also great artists in song and dance. It might well be that in such a Hymn of Love they may find their soul

The Divine character of lovers' joy in each other has not yet found proper expression in song But the lovers themselves know well that in the Creative Urge which is driving through them there is something of heaven During courtship they have felt that the love they bear each other is sacred They would guard it from any desecration And when they reach the culminating marriage-joy it is to them nothing less than Divine. "This is heaven" they whisper to each other.

It is out of this Heaven that comes that greatest of all miracles, a new birth A new body, a new mind, a new soul—has been brought into the world, and with it that delight which all take in the sight of a new life, whether it be human, bird, or animal—a baby, a chick, or a puppy. Of themselves neither the father nor the mother would have been able to do anything beyond providing favourable conditions for the growth of the babe within the mother's womb They were absolutely

dependent upon a Power immeasurably greater than themselves and high above as well as working deeply within them. This is what would have been most deeply impressed upon them. Both would have had to leave that miraculous development of their child to the working within the mother of that same Divine Activity which originally attracted them to each other, stirred their higher natures, and eventually produced in them the supreme marriage-joy. And it would be that same Divine Activity which urges all living creatures to create—that Activity the Divine Source of which we call God.

From this elemental emotion of joy there now develops a wonderful sentiment of love—of mother-love. As soon as the babe is conceived within her there springs up in the mother an anxious care for the welfare of her child to be. For its sake she will take special thought for her own health. Pain and discomfort she will gladly suffer that it may be well. Of its future happiness she will be constantly thinking. Of what it may become she will be continually dreaming. But when at length the little one is born, all the pain she has endured will be forgotten “for joy that a man is born into the world.” And there will come to full blossom in her that Mother-love which would sacrifice even her life that her child may live. From that time onward the happiness of her child will be her one great care.

As with human mothers, so is it also with birds and animals. In every creature is this self-sacrificing, forward-looking Mother-Love. And we all know stories of the heroic way in which a mother-bird, or a mother-animal will, at the risk of her own life, defend her offspring.

This forward-reaching Mother-Love may indeed be regarded as the main impelling force of the world. It is

not merely emblematic of what drives the universe. It is the drive itself. It springs straight from the Heart of the Creator. And its ultimate aim is the highest happiness for the loved one.

CHAPTER III

PAIN AND EVIL

THERE is all this happiness But there is another side to the picture With the crown goes also the cross. It was only at the cost of excruciating pain for one's mother and at the risk of her life that any of us came into being And before our parents came to be married at all we may be sure that both the father and the mother had to endure and give pain The course of true love never did run smooth The man had to select from all others her to whom alone he would be prepared to give himself for the rest of his life And he might not have been the only man who was wishing to do the same Rivals there may have been And with rivals the stirring up of cruel jealousy And the one woman whom he had so carefully selected may not have been willing to entrust herself for life to him She might not have been willing to welcome to her inmost sanctuary any who could not bear the test of her highest standard It was a rare privilege he would be asking of her And she would be giving herself for life If he fell by one iota below her standard how could she dare to risk it ? By refusing him she would give him pain By accepting him she might also give pain to another who might have hoped to win her Just as he, also, by striving to win her might have given pain to another woman who might have hoped for him to approach her.

Here again we know that among all races in every state of culture there are the same jealousies and disappointments, the same pains to be suffered and to be given And we may observe, too, among animals and birds combats between rivals showing that they, too, have like feelings with ourselves.

These are the thorns which accompany the rose of love

Then besides the inevitable pain there is also the risk of degradation. While this Creative Urge, if properly controlled, may carry man and woman up to heaven, if wrongly directed it may plunge them into hell. It may lead to appalling degradation of both man and woman.

That evil which comes earliest is unwholesome tampering with the body—with the genital organs. It may begin quite in infancy with teething. The infant may feel about for something to squeeze. And if not tactfully checked the harmful habit may grow. It is a practice more common with boys than with girls—though with girls also it does occur. It does not do the direct physical harm it was once supposed to do. But if allowed to persist this self-indulgence weakens the self-control and saps the man's manhood and the woman's womanhood. There is a wastage of energy which prevents the full development of the man or woman, and the complete utilisation of creative energy on the noble lines for which it was intended. It prevents the men from becoming the man he should become and from doing the good to others he should do.

Instead of biding his time and working hard for the ideal marriage that every man has somewhere in his mind he weakly indulges himself. As a consequence, when he marries he is unable to give his wife the satisfaction which is her due. He ejaculates too soon. He can be no real husband to her. While she is longing to be a mother he may have no desire or perhaps capacity to be a father. Affection between the two ceases. Love has long since gone. In its place there springs up angry resentment. Resentment heatens into anger. Being

with her husband becomes a perfect torture to the wife. Divorce will follow And with divorce the horror of publicity The public will be admitted to gaze on that which is utterly sacred And all because of a man's weakly allowing himself to fall into the habit of self-abuse.

This in its turn may very possibly have come about through listening to filthy conversation Smutty talk has a terribly suggestive power It puts ideas into the head that would never have naturally come there And evil seeds in some cases may fall on genial soil There they may germinate, take root, blossom, and give forth more poison seeds

Bawdy talk, too, fouls the surrounding air and smirches the fair feelings men should have towards women

Such talk may also easily lead to homo-sexuality which, if allowed to become prevalent may become a cancer eating into the life of a people, as it is already eating into the life of great cities like Berlin, Paris and London. On the Indian Frontier it is practised quite openly, a Chief and his nobles riding about with their favourite boys perched on the saddle behind them This pernicious habit does not involve "consequences" in the way of children. The consequences are of a precisely reverse character. When a man wants children—as for instance a Chief a son and heir—he finds to his disgust that he cannot have them The habit takes such a grip upon a man that he becomes impotent with women They are unable to arouse any desire in him He forfeits for ever, therefore, the love women can give His own manhood degenerates into sickly flaccidity And he becomes an object of scorn and reproach among men—a bugger

Possibly homo-sexuality may degrade only the man. The boy may not be lowered to the same extent. But prostitution depraves both the man and the woman. And although it is man who is the origin of the evil it is

woman who suffers. It is man who creates the demand. If man did not make the demand woman would not produce the supply.

If man instead of helping the Creative Urge to blossom naturally in a fruitful marriage allows it to degenerate into sheer lust ; if he had not debased himself woman would not have been there to answer his lust. For in woman also the Creative Instinct is urging her to marriage, children, and a happy home. Man, therefore, is the prime cause of prostitution. Yet at best the satisfaction he gets from his lust is only bodily and momentary. He gets from the wretched prostitute none of that woman's love for which in his heart he craves. He gets none of that satisfaction for his whole being—soul as well as body—which only a woman in great love with him can give.

And the woman—what does she get from her part in satisfying the man's lust ? Money. That is all. She is tempted into her disgrace by the lure of an easily-gained livelihood. And many of those who have fallen to this temptation may never have known any decency of life. In the horrible conditions of slum life in overcrowded cities a girl may have grown up without any conscience in the matter of relationship with men. She may never have known the happiness of home. She herself may be an illegitimate child. Possibly she herself may have been seduced too when quite young and drifted heedlessly into this disgraceful profession. And now she is in it she may become physically incapacitated from bearing children even when she may want to marry. And too frequent intercourse with man after man may have devastating consequences upon her whole constitution. Worst of all she may find that in selling her body she has sold her soul. Her self-respect may be lost. She will have become an object of scorn and reproach among women. A whore.

Also with prostitution goes the risk of catching that horrible scourge, venereal disease. Either man or woman may be disgustingly disfigured. And if not outwardly defaced the man may be so inwardly contaminated that if he marries he may infect his wife without her ever being aware of the risk she has been running. And through her their children may be born diseased for life. Statistics show that in England and Wales no less than 102,519 cases were treated for these diseases in 1937. And this does not by any means represent the number of diseased persons who go about infecting others and of whom there can be no record.

Then there is the evil of illegitimate intercourse. A woman who is no common prostitute may too readily allow herself to be seduced by a man. She may be left with all the shame of bearing a child out of wedlock and perhaps be abandoned by its father. And her unwanted child may be branded for life as a bastard. In this country alone some 25,000 illegitimate children are born every year.

To prevent such a possibility contraceptives are being increasingly used. With the present facilities for travelling far from observation, the use of these preventives offers a most insidious temptation. But no contraceptive is absolutely safe. Some risk always remains. And even if they are used, the pair never get full and complete satisfaction of soul and body. They may be truly in love with each other. But they may just miss the crown of happiness. They may be permanently disabled from having children, and for ever after may be with them the feeling of remorse that when they could they wouldn't, and when they would they couldn't.

Finally, even a good couple, well and truly married, may yet suffer untold misery. Through sheer ignorance of the technique of consummating their marriage they

may miss that satisfaction which is legitimately their due. And this failure may insensibly sour their lives. "There is nothing in it" they will say to their friends. When they are actually married and it is too late to withdraw from each other, they may discover they are not now and never have been real soul-companions. They may have married far too casually. They may never have tested this respective spiritual outlook. They may now discover that spiritually they have nothing in common. An utter incompatibility of temperament may reveal itself. He may prove to be a regular devil rather than the Prince Charming she had imagined. And she may turn out to be a perfect spit-fire instead of the angel she had appeared during courtship. And this incompatibility may act disastrously upon any children they have. Throughout their lives they may suffer from being brought up in a home at enmity with itself.

From all of which things it may be gathered that with every prospect of happiness before it marriage does involve the gravest possible risks.

CHAPTER IV

TRAINING FOR MARRIAGE

(The Churches' Recommendations)

SUCH are the pains and evils which marriage may entail. The ever-recurring problem before all mankind is, then, how to ensure that what is capable of causing both joy and pain in such extremes shall be so directed that the joy in the end will triumph over and finally dispel the pain. That is the issue before the whole world. And it is of great significance that in Christian countries the Churches are now beginning to pay earnest attention to it. Both Roman Catholics and Anglicans have in recent years recognised that while for the good of the family they insist upon the permanency of the marriage tie they have never properly trained men and women for the married state.

Here then is the flaw. For this most difficult, most delicate and most important of all human relationships those who conduct it receive practically no training, yet are violently condemned if things go wrong. We are trained most carefully for the Fighting Forces, for Diplomacy, for Business, for the Professions, but for Marriage—the greatest of all careers—not at all. It is an astounding oversight. And all we have now to be thankful for is that at last it is officially recognised, if not by the State at any rate by the Churches.

This duty was first definitely and officially recognised by the Lambeth Conference of 1930. The Committee on the Life and Witness of the Christian Community with

special reference to Marriage and Sex reported to the Conference :

Rightly we have put before our people Christ's standard of marriage, but we have done all too little to prepare them for it. Sex is a God-given factor in the life of mankind, and its functions are therefore essentially noble and creative. Correspondingly great is the responsibility for the right use of it. This emphasizes the responsibility of the Church for training her children in that attitude to all sex questions which is at once open and reverent. In our judgment instructions should be given to every child in the functions of the body before he or she becomes emotionally interested in the matter. Shame and secrecy in these matters need not exist for the child. He only learns them if and when he discovered the facts in undesirable ways. There is a grave necessity that in schools of all types such instruction should be given as will enable the children, particularly as they approach adolescence, to look at the whole question of sex, whether in plants, animals or men, in its rightful setting as essentially part of God's unceasing creative activity.

Engagement, if and when it comes, should find them (the betrothed) not merely equipped with that knowledge which is entirely compatible with innocence, but already accustomed to that whole setting of the sex-life—divine and beautiful—to which we have alluded. We also think that there should be a special preparation for marriage for persons between the engagement and the wedding. This need not be official or elaborate. It may be done, in part at least, through suitable literature. But the need for it is evident. We acknowledge that though the Church has set before her members the highest ideal of marriage, she has done but little to train them for it. There should be some expert priest in every diocese who should be ready to give advice as to courses of study and as to the wisest way of dealing with individual cases. There should be in the different branches of our Communion Councils of experts in these matters to whom the authorities in diocese or parish or college could have recourse.

Regarding the Family the Committee wrote

A vital condition of marriage is mutual love. This mutual

love needs thoughtful cultivation, so that the whole personality of each, mind and spirit as well as body, becomes more completely involved as life goes on. Marriage is a vocation. There is that in God which can only be adequately reflected, so far as this world is concerned, in the perfect union of man and woman. It gives food for awe as well as thought, that in that most momentous action—the creation of a human soul—man and woman are in direct co-operation with God.

The Committee also wrote

The educational value of a considerable family far outweighs any advantages which may come from an expensive education.

Regarding Birth Control, the Committee wrote

It is axiomatic that parenthood is for married people the foremost duty, to evade or disregard that duty must always be wrong. It is equally axiomatic that the state of marriage is a divinely ordered relationship in which intercourse between man and woman calls for the highest exercise of the Christian virtues of self-discipline, self-control and self-sacrifice. There are multitudes of married people who have found in that mutual sacrifice a bond of deeper unity as well as an ever-increasing moral strength. It follows, therefore, that it can never be right to make pleasure or self-indulgence the motive for determining to limit or refuse parenthood. Equally it can never be right for intercourse to take place which might lead to conception, where a birth would involve grave danger to the health, even to the life, of the mother, or would inflict upon the child to be born a life of suffering, or where the mother would be prematurely exhausted, and additional children would render her incapable of carrying out her duties to the existing family.

The whole Conference, consisting of three hundred and seven Archbishops and Bishops wrote on this question of Marriage and Sex.

The beauty of family life is one of God's most precious gifts and its preservation is a paramount responsibility of the

Church. Its foundation is the life-long union of husband and wife . . . Holy Marriage is part of God's plan for mankind . . . to maintain the ideal of marriage and therefore to preserve the social health of the community. It is a national asset of supreme value. . . . We must lift the whole subject of sex into a pure and clear atmosphere. God would have us think of sex as of something sacred. . . . We must reveal the noble origin of sex in the creative activity of a Father who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. . . . If the children have learnt from the first to connect sex instincts with the beauty and goodness of God, they will not only themselves be proof against some of the worst evils of our age, but will also become diffusers of that moral atmosphere where purity lives and all that is impure must die. We think that this duty of education needs far more careful attention than it has received. Rightly, we set before our people Christ's standard of marriage ; but we have done too little to prepare them for it.

We deeply sympathise with those who have burdens which are hard to bear. But we appeal to the whole community of the Church to remember that in home life, as in personal life, we are called upon to take up the Cross, to endure hardness, and to count upon the enabling power of the Spirit of God. And indeed when this sacrifice is made for the sake of the family, that Cross becomes a crown.

In the very same year as the Bishops of the Anglican Communion were arriving at these conclusions, the Roman Catholic Church was likewise recognising that instruction in what pertains to marriage must be given if the Church was to exact a vow of lifelong fidelity to the union. The late Pope, Pius XI, on December 31st, 1930, issued an Encyclical Letter which contained the following recommendations :

This mutual inward moulding of husband and wife, this determined effort to perfect each other, can in a very real sense, as the Roman Catechism teaches, be said to be the chief reason and purpose of matrimony, provided matrimony be looked at not in the restricted sense as instituted for the procreation and rearing of children, but more widely as a

companionship embracing the whole of life so that life is no longer an individual venture but a partnership

Not for the sake of perishable things nor that they may serve their passions, but that they may procure one for the other high and lasting good have they entered into the nuptial partnership, to be dissolved only by death. In the training and education of children, which must extend over a period of many years, it plays a great part, since the grave and long enduring burdens of this office are best borne by the united efforts of the parents.

Where this order of things obtains the happiness and well-being of the nation is safely guarded, what the families and individuals are, so also is the State, for a body is determined by its parts. Wherefore, both for the private good of husband, wife, and children, as likewise for the public good of human society, they indeed deserve well who strenuously defend the inviolable stability of matrimony.

All these things depend in large measure on the due preparation, remote and proximate, of the parties for marriage. For it cannot be denied that the basis of a happy wedlock, and the ruin of an unhappy one, is prepared and set in the souls of boys and girls during the period of childhood and adolescence.

Let, then, those who are about to enter on married life approach that state well disposed and well prepared, so that they will be able to help each other in sustaining the vicissitudes of life.

An important point to note in this statement is that the Head of the Roman Catholic Church declares that matrimony is instituted not primarily for the pro-creation of children but for a companionship which would include the whole of life. Matrimony is of course instituted for the bearing of children, but as His Holiness expressly says, chiefly for the "mutual inward moulding of husband and wife." Equally noticeable is the statement by the Anglican Bishops that "shame" need not exist. Sex must be thought of as "something sacred" as having its origin in the creative activity of God. Children therefore must learn to connect sex instincts with the beauty and goodness of God.

CHAPTER V

TRAINING FOR MARRIAGE.

(Voluntary Associations' Activities)

MANY voluntary organisations there are which deal with preparation for marriage in one aspect or another. Some are more directly concerned with destroying whatever may smirch the purity of marriage, others with the constructive aspect of creating happy homes. But whether destructive or constructive in their aim and activities all have in mind the vision of an ideally happy home—one among many millions in an ideally happy world. And all are animated by the conviction that the ideal is not only within their reach but within their grasp. It is not that only on tiptoe can they just reach the ideal in their strong hands they can firmly grasp the skirts of heaven and draw them down to spread their glory over all the earth.

Among the best known of these organisations are The Mothers' Union, The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene (founded by Josephine Butler), The Public Morality Council, The British Social Hygiene Council, The White Cross League, The Church of England Moral Welfare Council, The Girls' Friendly Society.

But I am taking the Alliance of Honour as an example of what is being done by these voluntary organisations and I am describing it in some detail because I have come to know more of it than I know of the others, and because I have been able to hear from its surviving co-founder, Mr Alfred B. Kent, the main facts about its inception, nearly forty years ago. I also select it for description

because it originated in and owes its driving power to religion. It was the example of Jesus Christ that gave the inspiration to its founders. And it has been to a very special degree the power of prayer that has given the impetus to its very successful activities.

In preparation for marriage the Alliance of Honour maintains that sex education is essential ; that chastity is possible, healthy, and virile ; that self-control is essential to happiness, and to the true development of personality , that the permanence and sanctity of marriage are safeguards to the rights of children ; and, finally, that the solution of sex-problems will come only in response to prayer and according as they are approached with thought and courage

The Movement was inaugurated in 1903 in answer to the pressing need for some united effort to counsel and guide young people in matters concerning sex, and to warn them of the perils to body and soul which lay in the temptations by which they were surrounded. It also sought to answer the need of parents and teachers for help in instructing those under their control. By 1904 the number of members enrolled was 810, of Branches formed 52, of booklets issued 22,000, and of persons at Meetings, 1,700. And so amazingly has it prospered since then that by 1939 the number of members enrolled was 171,230, of Branches formed 3,696, of booklets issued 8,273,420 and of persons attending meetings 3,092,963.

All this activity originated in the mind and soul of two clerks, both in their early twenties, in the City of London—the one Alfred Kent, a bank clerk, and the other Evelyn Bagnall, an insurance clerk. They were young, but they were men whose eyes were glowing with the vision of a happier world. And their hearts were flaming with zeal for Purity in the lives of their fellow-men. They

were the leaders in a small society of like-minded men who, working among boys and youths, soon realised the destroying effects of impurity and found that it was due to ignorance of physical, mental and moral consequences. Soon they decided that each member should undertake to promote the cause of Purity among those with whom he came in contact, to distribute literature, and to exert personal influence. From the very first the Alliance of Honour has been nurtured in the prayer spirit. One of the rules of the little informal society was that the meetings should open and close with prayer. And the young enthusiasts worked after business hours late into the night making plans, compiling literature, and writing letters, till at the end of a year they had interested a thousand men in their work.

And soon they began to feel the need of a Christian philosophy of the proper use of the Creative Urge and of promoting a happy relationship between a man and a woman. By a wide variety of activities they began now to educate public opinion in these intimate and sacred matters. They tried to show that it is from the creative energy that is derived much that is finest in art, philanthropy, and adventure. And they taught that the place of the Creative Urge in life was nothing less than fundamental in its importance.

The Alliance can now very justly claim that despite the open and avowed laxity, despite all the apathy and supineness of to-day, conditions differ profoundly from those which obtained when it was first launched in 1903. And it is largely due to their efforts that the rising generation is being awakened to existing evils, and is keen to tackle them with a "candour and a forthrightness which are wholly admirable."

The little group of eight or ten members in 1902 has expanded into a world-wide body with branches in many

countries The great majority of members, of course, hold the Christian faith. But there has never been any religious test of membership. and among Christians it is entirely inter-denominational The desire has been that all members should regard themselves as parts of a great whole and as channels through which the message of the Alliance might reach the world at large

The two chief means by which its message is carried to the world are (1) by the publication of pamphlets and booklets of which over nine million have now been distributed, and (2) by the organisation of meetings the attendance at which now numbers well over three million persons But besides these two chief methods much most useful work is done by personal interview Then a Lending Library has been built up for the use of members Specific articles are published in newspapers, magazines, and periodicals, both in this country and overseas, and the Press gives publicity to reports of the meetings A quarterly journal called *Honour* is published Also there is a whole Education Department of the Alliance And the custom is now well-established of holding a Purity Sunday annually in the month of January, both in this country and in many other parts of the world

The literature of the Movement is now most carefully scrutinised before being issued Some of the statements made in the earlier pamphlets had been criticised by medical men So the Alliance very wisely called a Conference of some leading physicians and psychologists and after consultation with them withdrew the earlier pamphlets and issued other and more authoritative statements It was, however, only on the directly physical effects of self-abuse that exaggerations had been made The scientific experts were in full agreement with the Alliance as to the evil done to the mind and character.

And, when one reads of the Alliance thus seeking the advice of physicians and psychologists, the thought does arise whether these, in their turn, would not be all the better if they sought advice from the Alliance—whether doctors who are consulted by patients of both sexes would not be of greater help to them if they had behind their scientific knowledge some of the Alliance spirit. Certainly if they had such a spirit they would inspire greater confidence in their patients. And the capacity to inspire confidence is a valuable part of a doctor's equipment

Through its Education Department the Alliance is developing a new branch of its work. Lessons on sex hygiene are given in both Day Schools and Boarding Schools. In the last year before the war 358 lessons were given to 3,827 boys in day schools and 331 lessons to 3,906 girls. And in Public and Boarding Schools 139 lessons were given to 928 boys. Lectures were given to students in Training Colleges and to the Staffs of Residential Schools. And the Headmasters of Public Schools have been circularised

Another important development of the Alliance is the organisation in 1923 of the Women's Section for dealing with the sexual problems of girls and women. Of this Miss Duncan is the secretary. Since its inception 11,408 members have been enrolled. These women realise that their work relies for its development on the "missionary enterprise" of its members. And they have organised their activities in such a way that in districts where there are more than three or four members they will find one who will act as honorary local representa-

tive, and so help the members to feel less isolated. Where the members are more numerous a Branch under the control of a Committee would be formed. There are now branches in South Africa, Egypt, Ceylon besides in this country. The Section has a special literature of its own, including four penny booklets by Dr. Enid Smith and it has been found that working girls and mothers are grateful for guidance in their special problems at so small a cost.

An important side of the Women's Section work is that done by addressing meetings of other organisations. But in propagating their message the Women's Section discourage vague talk on ideals only. Their teaching, with its Christian background, is direct and informative. It gives to the subject of sex its true perspective and a right meaning and thus helps to counteract the harmfully insidious teaching often found in films and plays. During 1938-9 197 meetings were addressed and after each opportunities for questions and discussion were given in order to find out reactions and clear up misunderstandings. The services of all speakers were offered free of charge.

A Prayer Fellowship is another source of strength to the Alliance. It is intended to deepen the spiritual value of the work of the Society and to form a link between praying friends in many lands. A staff prayer-meeting is held daily at Headquarters from 12.40 to 1 p.m.

The general impression one gets then from studying the inception and progress of this Movement is that now after thirty-eight years of effort it is only at the beginning of its career. And I say this because though originally

intended chiefly for men and for destroying evil, it is more and more devoting its energies to creating good ; and also because it is using women for building the home

In these ways it is appealing to the imagination of the common people. And the common people have no liking for dirt . they like to be clean. They want clean, pure, healthy happy homes. There is the need There is the imperative demand. Wherever they see the prospect of their needs being satisfied they leap to seize it. And herein lies the opportunity for the Alliance of Honour When the world has to be reconstructed after the war, the people will be clamouring for decent homes. After the last war, here in England alone we built four million new *houses*, with all the latest sanitary improvements, baths, running water and electric light After the present war we shall need twice that number of new *homes* with all the latest spiritual improvements of parents already trained for marriage before ever they were married, and of children well brought up by these well-trained parents, and attending schools instinct with the God-fearing, prayerful spirit of the great Co-Founders of the Alliance of Honour. And thus will preparation for marriage achieve its goal.

CHAPTER VI

THE BETROTHAL

FOR exposing the evil which may spring from the abuse of the mating instinct and in general instruction during the time of boyhood and girlhood much is being done, especially by the laity, women as well as men. But the most important stage of all in the preparation for marriage is reached when the time of betrothal is approaching. And to this period still more attention assuredly must be given. For then it is that far more definite advice and far surer guidance than has yet been available is vitally necessary. It is the most crucial period in the life of both the man and the woman.

Every young man in the ordinary course of nature must be drawn to some woman. Every young woman to some man. Some passionately, some more tepidly. But whether tepid or passionate, each has to be on his guard. Those simple children of nature, the forest tribesmen, would go off together with little restraint into the forest which extends all round them. And nowadays on bicycles, or in cars, young men and women can go off to the woods and hedgerows and downs. And they may provide themselves with contraceptives to prevent the consequences of any intimacy between them. But it is just here that they must be most vigilantly on their guard. And it is just here that warning and advice are most urgently needed. It is for this critical moment that all previous preparation must carefully lead up.

Therefore the essential point to mark in training for marriage is that, from childhood, onward through life, whether that be married life or not, the sanctity of whatever pertains to the married state should be definitely and

most vigorously recognised, and inculcated by parents, by the Church and by voluntary organisations. The state of matrimony is a Holy State. All about it is sacred. Therefore nothing connected with it should ever be ridiculed. Nothing coarsened. Nothing cheapened.

Nor should the slightest remnant of that age-long sense of shame be allowed to cling to it. If all about marriage should be treated as sacred, it should also be treated as completely natural. The hush which lies about the relationship of man and woman should be the hush, not of shame, but of holy reticence. It should be the hush of reverence we impose on ourselves as we enter a place of worship, whether that be Church or Chapel, Temple, Mosque or Synagogue.

Even tiny children have an innate sense of modesty, and this should by all means be encouraged. For it springs quite naturally in both boy and girl, and afterwards, in man and woman, from this inherent sense of the sanctity of the Creative Instinct. There is nothing to cause shame, and everything to fill them with pride that they have in them the potentiality of performing the miracle of bringing a child into the world.

Then, deeply imbued with the sense of the sanctity of the man-woman relationship, boys and men will always treat girls and women with that which is symbolised in the custom of taking off their hats to them. This attitude ultimately, though subconsciously, springs from the respect a youth has for his mother. And when he grows to manhood such courtesy should develop into chivalry from recognition that it is upon the wife will lie the burden and risk of first bearing and then rearing a family.

Correspondingly, the woman in her inimitable way should firmly exact from a man that deference which is

her due. Not by faintest suggestion should she allow her modesty to be infringed. Nor should she cheapen herself. Rather should she rate herself at the highest. And for the privilege of entering her sanctuary the price she should demand from the man who would presume to ask it, should be nothing less than lifelong devotion.

But the time will come when the great decision has to be made. Shall she or shall she not betrothe herself to him ? She has to decide to whom—if to any—she will finally give herself and yield all that she has held as most sacred. And how is she to make this decision, so fateful both for him and for her ? Unless she is really and truly and deeply in love she clearly could not plight her troth to anyone. But how is she to know whether she is thus fully in love ? She may not as yet be certain of the man. And he himself may very truly tell her that he cannot be his whole and real self to her while she herself is hesitant to respond. Some intimate friend may advise her that unless she feels herself at *peace* with him she cannot be in love. And this would be perfectly good advice. But this feeling of peace is not an infallible criterion by which to judge her relationship with him. Some outside interference may have upset him or her. For she cannot be at peace with a man who is not at peace with himself. And it is hard for a man to be this while his whole future is in the balance. He *should* be able to, but it would be difficult. Besides which, while inwardly he may be at peace with himself, outwardly he may give the impression of being cold and indifferent and the very reverse of a passionate lover.

But whether or no she accept the criterion of feeling at peace with the man it is essential that she should probe deep into him. Directly or indirectly she must find means of reaching his soul. For it is with his soul that she would have to unite her soul. Through sheer per-

versity he may call himself an atheist. Yet in spite of such perversity he may be exceedingly spiritual. Like a philosopher friend of mine who denied the existence of God, he may be convinced that Love rules the world, he may be a great lover of beauty, an ardent seeker after truth and staunch in his friendships. And such a man may become a devoted husband, as my friend did. It is not always wise therefore to take a man at what he outwardly professes himself to be. He may profess himself to be a devout Christian and go regularly to Church yet have only the faintest trace of the spirit of Christ in his make up. He may profess himself to be an agnostic yet be saturated with the deepest spirituality.

The woman with her sharp intuition must see through all this. For unless she can satisfy herself that the man has real depth in him and is worthy of what she will unreservedly, whole-heartedly, and whole-souledly be handing over to him she must never allow herself to be betrothed. He must be able to stand the test of her closest scrutiny—as she must be of his. But unless they can both be satisfied that there is between them a real companionship of soul there should be no union of their bodies there should be no betrothal, no marriage. They must, in fact, satisfy themselves that fundamentally they look at things in the same way. And not until they are satisfied that that way is the way of the best man or woman they know should they betroth themselves.

In the past opportunity for such searching of soul was not always possible, and hideous mistakes were in consequence made. With the greater freedom of these times such opportunities for intimate communion of souls can and should be made. And nothing could be more interesting and exciting if the pair will but penetrate beneath the shallow pose of broadmindedness and superiority characteristic of this age—and of all ages, of

this country—and of all countries, and get down to what each of them really is.

Then, having satisfied themselves in regard to the spiritual and most important aspect of their union, the time will have arrived for preparing themselves for that 'bodily union which from then onward should, with rare exceptions, be the only completely satisfactory way of expressing the spiritual union which presumably has now been effected

CHAPTER VII

THE MARRIAGE ACT

THE betrothal having now been finally agreed on it is imperative—absolutely imperative—that before the marriage itself takes place both the man and the woman should be informed in full particular of the definite process of wedding, and be given a scientific explanation of what then occurs. That is to say, the technique of this vital act should be frankly, albeit reverently, explained by parent, priest, doctor, or other expert, and by books. I shall have to enter into detail which it would be quite unnecessary for me to describe if I were addressing the forest-dwelling Baiga, who would have known all about “it” since they were boys and girls, but into which it is essential I should enter when I am addressing those who live the unnatural, artificial lives of our present immature civilisation.

Both betrothed will probably be aware in a general way that the marriage act consists in the planting of the seed of the man in the womb of the woman. They should now know that this is effected by a simple piston-like operation. But in this case both the piston and the cylinder are made, not of hard unyielding metal, but of tender, yielding, and exceedingly sensitive human flesh and blood. Moreover, the human cylinder is not inert and irresponsive to the action of the piston—it is receptive and indrawing. And the same power that drives the piston into the cylinder also permeates the cylinder itself, causing it to assist the entrance of the piston by an indrawing activity.

But what now has to be impressed upon both is that this simple operation in order to achieve its object must be carried out with consummate art and with the greatest

mutual consideration and helpfulness. It must not be fumbled and bungled. If skilfully effected it may lead to the culminating joy of a lifetime. If the insertion is unheedingly made the whole marriage act may miscarry and leave behind, in both bride and bridegroom, a sense of frustration, of disappointment, and of disillusionment which may affect their entire married life. The man must show control and consideration and realise that his bride is admitting him to what till this moment she had jealously kept secret and sacred from even her own mother. It is a tremendous step for her to take. And however eager he may be to enter into full enjoyment of her he must also remember that a woman's nature is not aroused so quickly as a man's. She will in time prove just as passionate as he is—perhaps even more. But that time is slower in coming to her than it is to him. Therefore he must keep himself in hand for a while, be gentle and tender with her, and patiently wait her response. The bride, too, will have to consider and help her bridegroom in this difficult though most beautiful act. She will have to take her part. She will have to do something more than passively submit. She must get rid of the last shred of a notion that there is anything shameful and indelicate in the marriage act.

It is well, therefore, for both to acquaint themselves with the technique of the operation. It is described in many books. I take that description given by Dr Isabel Hutton in her *The Hygiene of Marriage*, recommended by the Alliance of Honour. After insisting on the need for restraint in the man after insertion she says he will learn by experience how to control the motility of the organ and then be able to obtain the greatest possible benefit as well as pleasure from the act. Further, he will be able to control to a large degree the timing of the climax of his wife. Thus if she be not fully aroused

he can wait quiescent until she is in a condition to proceed with him towards the climax. This, however, says Dr Hutton, is an art that requires time and experience. Then as excitation continues the act proceeds involuntarily and without effort on the part of either the man or the woman. The two are then, for the time being, physically as well as mentally one.

A mutually adjusted couple should thus proceed simultaneously to the climax of the act—that orgasm which is so essential to the health and happiness of the couple. And by the term orgasm, Dr Hutton explains, is meant that unmistakable sensation which pervades and thrills through every fibre of the being, but which is especially concentrated in the organs of generation, spreading in pleasurable waves over the body and is followed by a general feeling of fitness and well-being. And, ideally, the orgasm in both should occur at the same moment. Such a mutual adjustment is not easy. And it may be a long time before anything approaching it is achieved. But it is when achieved that the best results are obtained.

The orgasm being completed there should be no sudden withdrawal by the man. But gradually the male organ will relax and be naturally and easily removed. Sleep usually follows almost at once. It is the natural completion of the act, and has a soothing and beneficent effect on both mind and body—though such tranquillity will ensue only if the act is culminated by orgasm.

Such is a bald unemotional statement by a lady doctor of what should occur in the marriage act. It will be noticed that she lays great stress on the two working in unison. Only if both bride and bridegroom act with sympathy and understanding the one with the other

will they together reach the climax of their love. Exact togetherness is a necessity if they are to gather ripe sweet grapes instead of immature fruit of their union.

Nor is this a matter of more pleasure or of less pleasure. It goes deeper far than that. It concerns the whole being of both. And it is the deeper spiritual aspect which has to be considered as well as the more distinctively physical. The two merge into one another. But now the spiritual comes into chief prominence. If the man must exercise restraint on his impetuosity till his more slowly responsive consort is completely roused, it is no less incumbent on the wife to let her husband feel how passionately her entire mother-nature is crying out for what he alone can give her. He must wait for her. But she must be ready to more than welcome him. And as she comes to feel to the full his impact upon her the terrific power of the Creative Spirit now driving compellingly through her will express itself through her body. In a perfect agony of joy she will grip him insistently to her till she has drawn his whole soul into hers and poured all her soul into his. In her Inmost Sanctuary both will meet. They will be united in a truly Holy Communion. They will experience the unbelievable bliss of oneness with their Creator. They will know as never before what true holiness is. They will see the Beauty of Holiness. And with the Heavenly Bliss will go a tenderness, a sweetness, a love for each other of overpowering intensity. Despite every effort nothing they can say or do will adequately express what they are now feeling. And this love for each other they will feel is, in truth, love for God. And love for God means love for all mankind. Their joy and their love and the beauty of the holiness they have seen they will yearn to shed forth on all mankind.

Only thus will their marriage be fitly crowned But then indeed will they be well and truly wedded They twain being one flesh will also be one spirit. Each will have fulfilled the most vital needs of the other What each for years has craved for, that the other will have given Sweetest thanks to each other will be on their lips. And in their hearts profoundest gratitude to God.

This perfection will not be achieved at once Perhaps not for weeks Perhaps never Like all arts, the art of wedding has to be learnt through many a crushing failure and many a cruel disappointment. But when at length it has been acquired and success has been achieved, the most sacred vow could never bind man and woman tighter together than they are now tied Only the joy and the thankfulness to each other and to God for their bliss could unite them so close In the bond of the spirit they will now be fast wed And those whom God has thus joined together no man could ever put asunder

But, be it noted, it was only through deliberately training themselves to be fit creative agents of the Creator that He was able to accomplish this marvel This is the lesson which those about to wed should learn

CHAPTER VIII

LOVE AND RELIGION

FURTHER, the couple may well note that true religion—a real and vivid sense of God—will add tenfold to the enjoyment of the marriage act. The Baiga derive intense enjoyment from their love-unions, and for the best of these unions they long that it may last for ever. But if to the joy of wedding could be added the joy of religion the resulting bliss would be immeasurably increased.

Can modern man and woman thus safely trust in religion? Has not science, as the “anti-Godists” in Russia believe and teach, driven religion from the field? Does God really exist? A few years ago some of the greatest thinkers of the day used to have these doubts. According to them the laws of physics and chemistry finally determined the course of the universe. The world was ultimately material. Thought and love were mere temporary emanations from matter, like sweat, thought exuded from the body. That ultra-material view of things is out of date. No first-rate philosopher of to-day takes so crude a view. Such crass materialism is not reasonable. It does not meet the point. It does not satisfy us as to the purpose of our being. Thinking men realise that there is a Power infinitely greater than themselves at work in the universe. And they are not satisfied until they have got themselves into the closest possible relationship with It—till, in fact, they have religion.

So the universe has come to be looked upon as a living universe, as a spiritual universe, as a universe with a soul. Physical science has shown that the ultimate particles of which it is composed are not like hard grains

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go on satisfying themselves, of the fundamentals on which they are living their lives But if the great leaders of religion, master poets, master philosophers, master scientists be thus consulted the conviction will surely grow upon the betrothed couple that the conceptions

of God in which they were brought up were as children's in comparison with the far vaster and at the same time more closely intimate view of God that the grown-up men of the future will entertain. And, consequent upon this greater conception of God, they will conclude that religion far from being a thing of the past is only just beginning to come into its own and that its more glorious days are yet to come.

Of this vaster, albeit more intimate, conception of God, Bergson in his last book, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, gives us an inkling, "God is love and the object of love," he writes, "divine love is not a thing of God it is God Himself." And this love in which mystics see the very essence of divinity can be both a person and a creative power. "There is a point in the soul," continues Bergson, "from which there springs an imperative demand for creation. The soul within which this demand dwells may indeed have felt it fully only once in its lifetime, but it is always there, a unique emotion, an impulse, an impetus, received from the very depths of things." So is conceived as creative energy the love wherein the mystic sees the very essence of God. And God thus conceived needs us, just as we need God. He needs us to love us. Creation is God undertaking to create creators, that He may have besides Himself, beings worthy of His love. Thus the universe is the mere visible and tangible aspect of love and of the need of love. Such was Bergson's view.

Some deep instinct in man makes him resent whatever rouses him to anger and hatred, whatever is cruel and brutal, whatever is sordid and ugly. His own natural impulse is to love—to love persons, to love his fellow-men, and especially her whom he would wed, to love beauty, and as a poet, painter, writer, to create beauty; to love truth and as philosopher or scientist, to pursue

truth. And this instinct of resentment against the evil and the horrid, and of aspiration after whatever is lovely and of good report must be an impression made upon the soul of man by the Soul of the Universe. It must be a revelation of what is fundamental in that :

*Stupendous whole
Whose body Nature is and God the soul ,*

and of which we all are parts

Religion, therefore, will persist. And it will still be founded on that spirit of loving-kindness, of forbearance, pity, and compassion which Jesus preached and which makes us love our neighbours as ourselves and do unto others as we would they should do unto us. That joy which was in Christ Jesus and which He would have been in us, we may be sure will be at the root of religion for all time.

The newly married couple may therefore be confident that religion is not a thing of the past but will grow and expand in the future. But an examination by them into the very spirit of things is all the more necessary when we reflect that it was a matter of the spirit and not of the body that first brought them together.

When a man is first attracted to the woman he intends to marry it is not the physical bodily union with her that he desires. The thought of that does not then cross his mind. It comes later. That bodily union is quite natural and quite legitimate, but the desire for it did not arise till it was seen as the only way of expressing his joy in her. And that joy, and the love which goes with it and springs from it, will be in him long before any specific desire for bodily union has arisen. It is love and joy that are the main attraction. And now he will find that in proportion as he realises the sanctity of marriage, in proportion as he realises that the Creative Urge working so overpoweringly,

both in him and in his bride, comes straight and direct from the Creative Spirit of the Universe, so will the ecstasy of his enjoyment increase.

This will be the better understood if we examine in some detail what precisely is the nature of that Force which compels them so insistently to each other. And we find that what has happened is this. They have been impelled to unite by that tremendously attractive Power, the Creative Urge, the Spirit of the Universe whom we designate, God. And they know that from the union which has now taken place a child will in the course of nature be born. And science will tell them that during the marriage act, from among the millions of microscopic germ-cells which the husband ejaculated into his wife one has penetrated an ovum in the womb of the woman. That male germ-cell has thereby fertilised the female ovum which, without such penetration, would have remained sterile. And thus fertilised the ovum will forthwith grow and grow and expand and develop till a baby is formed and quickens in the womb of the mother and, nine months after its inception, is born into that world out of which its mother herself was born and of which she has ever since remained a constituent part.

Now the germ-cell of the man, though microscopically minute, has embedded in it all his main characteristics, his root disposition, and even such details as the shape of his nose, or the colour of his hair or his eyes. And the germ-cell of the woman—the ovum—though not quite so minute, likewise bears in it all her main features. And when the man's germ-cell penetrates the woman's ovum the characteristics of the one blend and mingle with the characteristics of the other. So when the child is eventually born and, after birth, grows and develops into a man or a woman, it exhibits a combination of the chief traits of both its parents.

THIS being so it is reasonable to suppose that the man (or the woman) bears the same relationship to the world out of which he (or she) was born as the germ-cell bears to him (or her). He himself would be, in fact, just a germ-cell of the world—of the great world around him which gave him birth and in which he lives and moves and has his being. And as the germ-cell within his body is stamped with his image and animated by his spirit so would he himself be stamped with the impress of the world about him and be animated with its spirit. In other words, he would, as indeed he himself most vividly feels at the culmination of the marriage act, be actuated by the Creative Urge or Spirit of the world—by God. And as the man is both most actively present *within* the tiny germ-cell of his body and also immeasurably greater, and high and beyond it, so also may we conceive of God as most actively, and pauselessly within the man and also infinitely greater than him and high above and beyond him. That is to say, the Creative Spirit of the World, God, will be both most penetratingly immanent and also unimaginably transcendent. He will not be as completely apart and separate from us as most of us were taught to believe. He will be both far nearer to us than any father is to his son. He will be as near to us as the thoughts we think or the joys we feel. Though in spirit He will also be as far above and beyond us as the farthest star is as far above our physical bodies. And here we have an inkling of that vaster, finer conception of God which will in its turn deepen, enrich, and expand religion.

Another point has to be noted. As the germ-cell, once fertilised, has in it the power to grow and expand and develop till it becomes a full-grown human being so has an individual human being, once touched by the Holy Spirit—by the Creative Spirit of the Universe—

the capacity to expand and develop till he becomes truly God-like.

Have we any proof of this? India could supply many examples, even at the present day. The Maharishi Ramana is one. But I will take an instance from this country. Mrs Staveley, the authoress of *The Golden Fountain*, describing¹ such an experience writes .

My consciousness is alight with a new fiery energy of life ; it feels to extend to an infinite distance beyond my body, and yet remains connected with my body I live in a manner totally new and totally incomprehensible, a life in which none of my senses are used and which is yet a thousand times as vivid It is living at white heat—without forms, without sound, without sight, without anything which I have ever been aware of in this world, and at terrible speed It feels that my soul is projected or travels for incalculable distances beyond my body

Later on she writes “ My mind became faint and died, and I could no longer think of or on God, *for I was one with Him* I was still I ; though I was become Ineffable Joy ”

On similar lines the Indian Muslim poet and philosopher Iqbal wrote .

He who comes nearest to God is the completest person
Not that he is finally absorbed into God—on the contrary
he absorbs God into himself The true person not only
absorbs the world of matter by mastery he absorbs God
Himself into his Ego

That is the view of a Muslim poet only recently dead. It expresses in a different way much the same view as that held by a much earlier Persian poet, Hallaj (Mansur), who announced that he was God. He was tried for

¹ *The Prodigal Returns*, p 67

blasphemy and sentenced to death. In order to force him to retract he was given three hundred blows with a rod. Then they stoned him, cut off first his hands and then his feet, but before they cut out his tongue he uttered a prayer ending with these words : " These Thy servants whose zeal for Thy religion and in desire for Thy favour are gathered together to slay me, forgive, O Lord Have mercy upon them. For verily, if Thou hadst revealed to them what Thou hast revealed to me they would not have done what they have done, and if Thou hadst hidden from me that which Thou hast hidden from them, I should not have suffered this tribulation "

What Hallaj was maintaining with such tremendous force of conviction was that man is essentially divine. In one of his poems he wrote .

Thy Spirit is mingled in my spirit even as wine is mingled
with pure water
When anything toucheth Thee, it toucheth me Lo, in every
case Thou art I

And again he wrote

I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I
We are two spirits living in one body
If thou seest me, thou seest Him
If thou seest Him, thou seest us both

Iqbal, in commenting ¹ on Hallaj's statement " I am the creative Truth," which for Muslims means " I am God," says that the true interpretation of his experience is not the likeness of a drop of water slipping into the sea but " the realisation and bold affirmation in an undying phrase of the reality and permanence of the human ego in a profounder personality "

¹ Lectures on " The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam," p 134

Likewise, Martin Buber, the great living Jewish mystic, speaks of the mystical experience "enlarging the soul to the Universal," and of the Universal soul being in each soul

Numerous other illustrations might be given from Hindu mystics. All serve to show that a human being, once he is touched by the Holy Spirit, is possessed of the power to grow and expand till he becomes Divine—becomes a God-man—not God Himself, for God is the Soul of the Universe. But as instinct with the Spirit of God, as the ovum in the womb of a woman is instinct with the spirit of the mother

To return now to the husband and wife we have been considering we shall see from what is said above that he has in him and she has in her the latent capacity to be as great a man or woman as ever lived. And each should have no less an ambition. But this need not mean that their desire for bodily union will abate. Rather will it quicken. Most people would perhaps assume that the more deeply spiritual the love of a man and woman for each other might be the fainter would become their desire for bodily union and the less importance would they attach to the physical aspect of their marriage. A truly spiritual husband and wife, most would suppose, would look upon it as only of secondary importance. There are, however, those who think quite otherwise. They believe that the more deeply spiritual the love of husband and wife the more—not the less—need do they feel to express it in the way ordained by God. The more deeply permeated they are with religion and the more their sense of the near Presence of God has been quickened by the Marriage Act the more urgent will be their conviction that the only way of adequately express-

ing the passion of their love for each other will be through the most intimate bodily union. Only thus could they fully and completely manifest all that they had become and meant to each other.

By God Himself they had been made one flesh. Through the Consummation of the Marriage their whole bodies had been thrilled with the Bliss of Heaven, till they were transfigured in the Light from that fire which was raging within them and which each had ignited in the other. And this being so the husband and wife would naturally and rightly resort again and again to the Marriage Act as the only completely satisfying way of fulfilling their deep need for each other.

And with the possibility which is with every mother of bearing a Jesus or a St Francis, with this knowledge both have that they are made in the image of God and that the same God Who is so infinitely greater than they are is there working unceasingly in them, with this assurance they have that He is as dependent on them as they are on Him and that He is using them, His creatures, as His creative agents for creating a new and better world, a true kingdom of God upon earth—should not Love and Religion be inseparably bound up with each other and the Joy of the one but add to the Joy of the other? Should not God, Love, and Religion be for husband and wife one and the same till the Joy of the Creator in creating glows in each breath they breathe, each thought they think, each deed they do?

CHAPTER IX

CONTINENCE NOT CONTRACEPTION

THEN as this sense of the sanctity of marriage deepens within both the man and the woman they will instinctively let it govern every one of their relations in married life. Especially will they let it decide that most intimate problem . when and when not physical union should take place

And in coming to a decision the man's sense of chivalry should remind him of the burden, even though it may be a glad burden, which his wife may have to bear. He may try to persuade himself that his manhood requires intercourse and that if his wife is not fit to bear another child they must use contraceptives rather than have no connection at all. But here he may well take pause. He may well think out whether constant indulgence really is a necessity or only a luxury. He may well consider the case of priests and nuns. There may be objections to vows of celibacy being enforced upon them for a life-time, but their example at least shows him the possibility of continence. And is such restraint too great a price to ask a husband to pay for the health, the happiness, and the self-respect of his wife? Nor need the restraint be considered as a suppression, for, as we shall see later on, the creative urge can be directed into other channels. The sense of shame which used to cling to marriage was altogether unnatural. But wholly natural is the sense of shame which surrounds the use of contraceptives. And no husband with a spark of chivalry in him will impose them on his wife. A sense of disgust at their nastiness and a fear lest the white beauty of his communion with

his wife might be irretrievably sullied will make him halt

But the woman also has a part to play. She, too, must have her say. For she more than he is the creative agent through whom the Creator carries on His work of creation. Every true woman has therefore in her a profound sense of dedication. In the supreme moments of married life she feels a Call. She feels the Call to deliver over her entire self, body, mind, and spirit—all—to the holy purposes of God. There are occasions when in the very nature of things it is imperative that she should refuse all intercourse. But apart from those regular occasions and others when illness may absolutely forbid it, how can she possibly refrain from fulfilling her part in carrying out the Divine purpose and bringing a little one into the world? Would not the use of preventives offend her deepest sense of womanhood? Quite certainly it would impair the health-giving tone which natural intercourse most providentially gives to both husband and wife. But would it not also tarnish the whole spiritual significance of the supreme Act of Consummation? Would it not foully blot the unsullied beauty of the perfect union? Would it not jar distractedly on the wondrous harmony of the final Marriage Act? If the man must be man enough to control himself when his wife's condition imperatively demands abstention, should not the woman, when nature no longer forbids, be woman enough to yield herself once more to her Creator? Should she not take pride in being the means of bringing into being yet another of those little children who are made in the image of God and who have been likened by Jesus to the kingdom of heaven?

Most disastrously for the world this wholesale use of contraceptives has spread in every country under the

guise of common-sense virtue. It is not regarded as a vice. Moreover, those who have fallen victims are not always the wicked—they are often the very flower of a country. And this subtle form of sin—truly a sin against the Holy Ghost—is accepted by men and women through sheer ignorance and want of thought. They know not what they do. They see not that the most beautiful revelation of their partnership with God as Creators is being degraded by them to the depths of self-satisfaction.

Consequently, everywhere to-day there is evidence of the deliberate limitation of families among poor and rich alike—among the village folk of this country who in former days peopled the great Dominions, and among the nobility whose sons have shown themselves to be such master-leaders of men. Though we know that it was from large families that our greatest men, such as Wesley and Nelson, were born, we yet submit to the scandal of seeing our best homes everywhere closed to the would-be comer. And who knows but what a Shakespeare may thereby have been prevented from being born? It is sheer race-suicide. The science of birth-control has prevented millions and millions of so much needed men and women from ever coming to life. And all because married couples have never been really and truly and deeply impressed with the underlying and over-riding spiritual significance of the Act of Consummation and have never realised the joy of offering their joined selves to God for the creation of a new life.

We have, then, to rid ourselves once and for all of the pernicious idea that the small family is necessarily better than the large and that the standard to go by is the standard of luxurious living. On the contrary, the large family and plain living should be the aim for poor and

rich alike, both for the sake of the parents and of the children. For the sake of the children especially, because for education in life nothing is better than that afforded in a large family. For the give and take of life, for the rubbing off of edges, for teaching the need of mutual sacrifice and the art of good comradeship, and for imparting the graces and the large generousities what better educators are there than the brothers and sisters, the father and mother, of a large family? Certainly better education in real life cannot be found in those academic institutions where boys are herded together divorced from their mothers' and sisters' gracing influence and where girls are collected in hordes away from the virile influence of their fathers and brothers

Not small select families wrapped in luxury and afraid to mud their feet, but big natural, healthy families, with grit to stand up to poverty, are what is needed. Families up to the limit of the mother's capacity for bearing them are what the world requires

But if the world needs these large families it must be ready to pay for them. The whole financial burden should not be allowed to fall upon the parents. The State should share it with them. For on the economic side alone children should be welcome to the State. Supplying the needs of large families for food, clothing, and housing is good for trade and industry. And improved trade and industry means diminishing unemployment. Besides which, the whole community is cheered and heartened by the sight of children everywhere, children romping, laughing, and generally enjoying themselves

Therefore, when the community has so much to gain both economically and spiritually from parents having large families, the State, by means of family

allowances and by reduced income-tax, should make it economically possible for every married couple, however poor, to bring children to the limit of their capacity into the world. And for the same reason voluntary organisations, public-spirited individuals, uncles and aunts of the children, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters of the parents should all help in the great national task of filling and keeping the homes.

Yet there may be cases where no such help is forthcoming. The couple may be left entirely on their own resources and these may be wholly insufficient to support a single other child. That may be so. But even then, if neither from the State nor from any other source is money forthcoming for the maintenance of another child, and if economy has been practised to the last penny, in the final resort it is abstention and not prevention that must be exercised. At all costs the virgin beauty of the Communion must be kept unsullied. No blemish must be permitted to pollute its loveliness.

In that case the husband and wife may for the future have to forgo the full marriage embrace. But there are less full ways of embracing and thereby of expressing the joy which each has in the other and is all the time pining to give to the other. The Creative Urge which is still racing through them will no longer result in the birth of a child. But their soul-union may even grow closer. They may enter so deeply into the essential being of each other that the use of contraceptives will become a laughing absurdity. They may penetrate to deeper recesses of the soul than they had ever reached before. The Creative Urge working in them may not now find its outlet in the producing of children, but it may yet find scope in daily work, in creating beauty in the home, in the creation of noble works of art—of poetry, literature, music, or painting. Or it may find

scope in humanitarian work for lessening the suffering and adding to the happiness of mankind.

Especially qualified will the couple have now become to fight the evil to which the Creative Urge may lead if uncontrolled and selfishly directed and to show forth the joy it may bring if used as God intended. They will now be able to expose the evil of self-abuse, of sodomy, of whoredom, and of illicit union, and to show the tortures of marriage without soul-union, and with all the weight of their own experience behind them declare unto others a more excellent way.

They will be able with authority to exhort men to hate the thing which is evil. Unsuspected by themselves, their own joy will give shine unto all the world. And their continence may in the end have its reward. It may not have ended the supreme happiness of their married life. As we shall see in the final chapter, it may have opened the way to a more abundant joy.

CHAPTER X

THE HOME OF THE FUTURE

HITHERTO we have dealt with the parents. Now we must picture the kind of home of which they will be the nucleus and which they will build round them.

But it is difficult to write of a model home without creating the impression that we are setting up something altogether too good for this world. It is difficult to avoid the appearance of priggishness. Nevertheless, we are bound to have in our mind some kind of standard by which to measure our efforts. And the standard of perfection which we would now set up is one which is not only possible of realisation but should most definitely be attained by those women and men who will have to be building the world of the future. For in the Scottish home from which the present King of England chose his bride we have evidence that high ideals are not impossible of realisation even here and now. What then will the home of the future be like? At what kind of home shall we aim?

The young married couple of the future, having learned, we may presume, when at all costs to restrain themselves and when to give themselves out to each other with the utmost power that is in them, will realise that the happiness they experience on their honeymoon, and which each couple thinks is greater than any married couple have ever known before, is but a foretaste of a happiness which will be theirs in ever-increasing intensity throughout the rest of their lives, provided only that, with a deepening sense of the holiness of their marriage, they deliberately cultivate their capacity for the enjoyment of higher and yet higher happiness. Should they

so determine, then each of them will strive to be all the best that the one had seen in the other. The wife will do all she can to be what her husband saw in her in the first days of courtship. The husband will set himself to be the hero his wife was convinced she saw him to be.

With the fervent wishes for their happiness still fresh in their memory the young couple will keep continually before their eyes that vision of heavenly bliss which they dimly beheld on their wedding-day. Always they will retain a picture of that happier state which most certainly may be theirs if only they will persevere in creating it for themselves—that heaven which to a surety may be theirs if they will but draw upon the inexhaustible Spring from whence came the joy in each other which first drew them together.

Therefore by every means at their disposal, by prayer—by the awakening and development of their sense of God—by regular attendance at religious services, whether in Church or Chapel, in Temple, Mosque or Synagogue, by constant contemplation of the beauties, the glories and the terrors of Nature, by studying the sacred literature of their own and other religions, by reading the lives of spiritual leaders—by any of these means they will seek to get nearer to the Fountain Source of all Good. They will make in their minds, for themselves, a picture of the Kingdom of God. That first will they seek. And what they seek they will find. They will find it within them. And it will be like unto their own little children. What the mother sees in each of her children “Of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Then, in their secret soul the young couple will hold the high ambition of making their own home the finest of those basic units upon which, in the last resort, the destiny of their country will depend. And having this ambition they will not shrink from having children up

to the limit. With children, it is true, come endless cares and complications, irritations, conflicts of opinion between father and mother, parents and relations, strains, clashes, and troubles of every kind. And the young couple may look with dismay upon increasing their number. Children have to be fed—and with the right food, to be clothed—and with the right clothing, to be housed—and in healthy rooms. They have to be washed, kept tidy, tended in sickness, amused and provided with playmates; and, most important of all, to be strictly brought up in religion and carefully educated. And these requirements impose a fearful strain on both father and mother.

Yet this is not all that children mean. Even with these, and with many another trouble and anxiety which children cause, does not every mother in her heart love to have their presence in the home? Does she not delight in their cries for her, the patter of their little feet along the passages, their shouts of joy and laughter, their fondlings and caresses? And does not every father on his return from bread-winning love to be greeted by them? Both parents will have to sacrifice much. But will the word "sacrifice" ever be mentioned between them, still less spelt with a big "S" and regarded as a cross? Will not every sacrifice rather be a cheerful giving—a giving without thought of return?

So to the young couple children will be a joy, not a burden. More children they will prefer to more luxury. The present cry is for tanks, more tanks, and still more tanks. When peace comes it will be for children, more children, and still more children. So the larger the family the greater will be the parents' pride. the more they will have to give to their country and the world.

In Russia are excellent institutions which care for the mother in child-birth, and feed, clothe, teach, train, and

amuse the children But these are institutions. And the institution may be used to a point but never allowed to take the place of the home. It is a home, therefore, that each young couple will strive with infinite care and inexhaustible patience to build up

And in this high endeavour to make their home perfect and to fulfil their country's need for children they will seek, and have a right to expect, all possible help from the Church, from the State, from those voluntary associations, local and national, which devote themselves to the welfare of the nation. Nor will they rest content with only seeking help. They will be ready to give out of the abundance of their own experience and of the joy which it has brought to them.

So will they grow in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man In sharing every joy and every sorrow, and in together facing the inevitable jars and discords, the frets, worries and devastating disappointments of the daily round of family life, they will steadily toughen the fibre of the spirit which binds them together And as valiant partners in every phase and aspect of their common life they will ride gaily over the billows of adversity and come out triumphant

The husband, if he has prepared himself as carefully for fatherhood as the wife should have done for motherhood, will helpfully share his wife's cares or duties, not excepting her care of the babies Correspondingly, he will keep her informed of his affairs and take sweet counsel of her In the family the father may have greater influence with the daughters and the mother with the sons. But both will act as one. Decisions will be joint decisions. Their paths will not diverge. Both will go the same way

And as in the high art of making a home it will be upon the mother that its beauty will mainly depend,

to her will chief honour be given. The father with the daily bread to earn or with vast business to transact may deem his work to be the more important. But even if it were a Prime Minister's it would not be of such fundamental significance nor so difficult as that of the mother's in creating a home and maintaining it day in and day out. It would not require the same delicacy of handling, steady persistence, and unrelieved responsibility, or the same quickness of decision in sudden emergency. And with his wife's cares daily before his eyes the man's sense of chivalry will prompt him to show her that he recognises the greater value of her work. He will rank her as Queen in the home and see that all treat her with the reverence due to her rank.

Yet even Queens need wise counsel to guide them in their exacting service. The mother, with her nerves frayed from the strain of holding a home together when she may be suffering from ill-health caused by child-bearing, may often need the soothing word. And this the husband will be ever ready to afford her. While she, on her part, with her deeper experience of handling human beings gained in making a home, may be able to smooth the way for him in managing his business. How much further in sharing his life, and in public life of her own, she should go will be a matter for mutual adjustment. She may be eager to be constantly with him in society, in sport, in public life. But as long as he has her sympathy and counsel that is all he has a right to expect of her in his life outside the home. The Queenship of Home must ever be the main consideration. But the "Englishman's home is his castle" must not be too stressed. The home must be no forbidding fortress with castellated walls and iron gates, a moat and a drawbridge. It must be treated as a living cell with

the finest filaments radiating from it in all directions and from all directions radiating into it and connecting it with other living cells

Members of the home, both parents and children, will be continually attending social gatherings, entertainments and meetings. Reciprocally, they will be constantly entertaining relations and friends and their children. There will be endless comings and goings, outings, excursions, parties and dances. And members of the family will be members of clubs and associations of many kinds, sport, social, cultural, religious.

Innumerable are the activities which connect the different homes together just as the millions of cells which in their togetherness make up the body of each one of us are connected in one compact whole. And each home would be a centre from which would radiate an influence of intensest vitality on all other homes. Homes would form themselves into groups and these into groups of groups in ever-expanding circumference till the nation is reached and then the whole family of nations, and finally the whole universe out of which the tiny home-cell itself had originally sprung and from which it will continually receive its sustenance

CHAPTER XI

CULMINATION

THE married bliss at the Consummation of the Marriage seemed at the time to be the very acme of all possible human happiness. Husband and wife appeared to have already reached heaven. Yet mankind has, as we have seen in a previous chapter, known an even higher happiness. And this Bliss Divine has been experienced by unmarried, as well as married, by women as well as men, and alike by Jews and Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. This Bliss—above Happiness—above Joy—is indeed at the foundation of all religion, and of all religions, as well as being the goal towards which each aspires. It should, therefore, be the ultimate inspiration of every home in every country, and be the final ambition of every parent. How then is this ambition to be achieved?

A husband and wife in the Act of Consummation will have been more fully, truly, and unreservedly their whole selves than they had ever been before. And all will have been a giving of every atom and iota, every drop and drain of themselves, to each other in the carrying forward of the Creator's work of creation. They will have come nearer to God and God will have come nearer to them than they had ever known Him. The upward reaching surge of the Divine within them will have been met by the downward reaching touch of the God above them. In the ecstasy of their joy at the climax of the Act they will unwittingly have torn aside the veil which ordinarily hides heaven from view. And through the parting they may perhaps on some rare occasion have caught a fleeting glimpse of still fuller joys. Should this be so they will realise that superlatively beautiful as

has been the heaven they have already reached—yet greater joys may still be won. Once therefore having rent the veil they will be wise first to keep it parted so that the heavenly vision may be ever with them, and then fit themselves for deeper entry into the glories they have, as yet, but dimly glimpsed.

How is this to be done? How are they to keep up and deepen the communion they have held with God through each other?

If they will turn to the Bible they will find the help they need. They will mark the words of Christ “Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect,” as also His prayer to God “that all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us . . . and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one; I in them, and they in me that they may be made perfect in one.”

They may mark too that the same note of the possibility of perfection is struck in other passages from the New Testament. Thus St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians looked forward to the time when “we all come in the unity of spirit, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, with the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” What St. John says in his first Epistle they will also note “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be—but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him—for we shall see him as he is.”

And if they take the view of Incarnation that in it God makes Himself manifest in human form in order to show man what he may become and may be, they will have to

pay very serious attention to these texts. Christ's commandment to us to be perfect they will have to take literally, and believe that they can be like Him, that they can be like God, that there is no impossibility in it. And having full faith that they can be perfect, they will have to act on that conviction, and not falsely put down to modesty any shrinking from such an ambition but see it for what it is, fear—craven fear of being great.

Moreover, they will have to realise that God who was made flesh in Christ may again come among men, and once more show us what we may be; and that this time the Incarnation may be in the form of a woman. Or, again, it may be in the form of a man-woman, i.e., of a man and woman united together in the bond of holy wedlock.

In my *Living Universe*¹ I put forward, not merely as a surmise, or as a dreamy speculation, but as a definite inference which I considered might and should be drawn from the facts placed before us by science, the conclusion that the planets of many stars besides our sun must be inhabited by living beings, even though they would, of necessity, be very different from any animal or man on this earth. I further inferred that a few of such planets might be inhabited by beings on a higher level of life than ours. Lastly, I concluded that among these highest beings the supreme unit might be a pair—not a male or a female, but a married "man" and "woman."

God is Love. True. But love must be manifested in living beings. There can be no such thing as love in the abstract—in the air, so to speak. It must take concrete form in beings capable of loving and of receiving and responding to love. Arguing thus I concluded that the married "man" and "woman" would form one unit and that between the two there would be such close

¹ John Murray, 1933.

reciprocity, such constant interplay of stimulation and response, first the "man" stimulating and the "woman" responding, and then the "woman" stimulating and the "man" responding, that it would be hard to think of them as of two sexes, but rather as of one—not as two persons, but as one person, neither being complete without the other. The highest unit would be neither a "man" or a "woman," but a "man-woman." So closely united would the pair be as to be reciprocal in their activities; and so mutually stimulative and responsive as to act as one. And as an example of the kind of union I meant I took the case of General and Mrs. Booth, the great founders of the Salvation Army.

I repeat then my view that the married pair must occupy the supreme place in the universe. And I re-affirm this view because on this planet leaders of all the great religions have so far failed to recognise the value of women in the life of religion and the importance of the married state. Even in the Christian religion women are allowed only the lowest positions in the service of the Church. In the greatest of the Christian Churches the leaders are not allowed to marry, and in the Church of England, though they are permitted to marry, the wives of Archbishops and Bishops are not officially recognised. Thus the whole tendency is to give the impression that men rank *themselves* as of a higher spirituality than women and regard celibacy and virginity as of more spiritual value than marriage. This impression I believe to be an error of the first magnitude and, if not removed, as likely to be fraught with disastrous consequences for the human race.

Notwithstanding all which it will be well for the married pair we are here considering to steep themselves

in the spirit of the Bible, especially of the Psalms, the Prophets, the Gospels, and the Epistles, and to attach themselves and remain attached to some religious community, whether in Synagogue, Church or Chapel founded on the Bible as one way by which they may reach the fuller joys of heaven. While another way will be through Nature. Nature is the outward vestment of God. In Nature is manifested His very Spirit. And he who would enter into the Spirit of God will glory in It in the vastness of the starry firmament, in the splendour of a sunset, in the grandeur of great mountains, and tempestuous seas; he will inhale It in the beauty of the lily, smell It in the fragrance of the rose, hear It in the song of birds, catch It in the play of little children, and read It in their mother's smiles.

All this the husband and wife will absorb deeply into themselves, contribute to it what they enjoy of God in the services of their own place of worship, and mingle both with the ecstasies they have known in their Holy Communion with God during the Act of Consummation. Then the whole together they will grasp firm hold of, fasten into them, till it penetrates them through and through and becomes a permanency of their being.

Having thus, both in places of common worship with their fellows and in Nature, saturated themselves with the Holy Spirit of God each might well retire into the solitude of his and her own soul to be alone with God if haply they may be at one with Him. Solitude must be continually alternating with society. And here they might advisedly avail themselves of that discipline of continence which at certain periods is imposed upon them by Nature or which, for some good reason, they may have had to impose upon themselves. Having had to separate them-

selves from each other they might use the enforced interval of separation for the purposes of solitary, solemn communion with God.

Either while still in the open air in touch with Nature, or alone in a room, each will then enter into the stillness and silence of his own soul. All striving will cease. Instead there should be an offering and joyful giving of the entire heart and mind and soul to God, and a total submission of themselves to Him. But the silence would not be of the helpless stillness of inertia. The bustle and hustle of surface activity might be stayed. But in the premeditated stillness there would be intense activity. The calm would now be the calm of assured mastery. Each would become master of himself. He would be truly self-possessed. Centred on himself he would be more deeply centred on God. A new poise would come to him ; a new quietude and composure.

Then, by the grace of God, in the silence there may come a great awakening of the soul. Vast native latent powers of the self may be unloosened and a new illumination burst into light. And then there may emerge, in the words of Aurobindo, the great Indian seer, " a subtler, purer, and more powerfully ecstatic energy of delight "

In the first fresh flush of spring, when winter is past, we overflow with the joy of existence. We rejoice in the glowing sunshine, in the delicate greenery, and the radiant flowers. It is a joy to be alive. But in the illumination which may now come to the husband or wife, or both, there would be something far beyond the highest exultation. And he or she would experience what the authoress of *The Golden Fountain* describes as " a burning fiery essence of joy, a radiant glory of delight, a holy and ineffable fulfilment of the uttermost needs and longings of the soul."

But there is a yet higher state to which they might rise.

"In the highest ascents of the spiritual bliss," says Aurobindo,¹ "there is not the vehement exaltation : there is instead an illimitable intensity of participation in an eternal ecstasy. Peace and ecstasy cease to be different and become one." All differences and contradictions being reconciled there is a calm and deep delight. "And this calm and this delight will rise together as one state into an increasing intensity and culminate in the eternal ecstasy, the bliss that is the Infinite."

This Culmination of all things the husband and wife might reach. And then their love for each other would be tenfold intensified. They would see things in a new light. They would have acquired a new frame of mind, a new attitude to life. Everywhere in everybody they would see the Divine. Their whole hearts would go out to it. Straight way they would go forth to awaken the world.

And in the first vehemence of their ardour they might want to go up into the hills and shout their joy from the top of the mountains. Or they might want to *do* something—to do something startling—to do something which would bring men up with a start and force them to listen.

Possibly they might aspire to creating some vast world-wide organisation like the Salvation Army or the Boy Scouts. And such bodies are all to the good as far as they serve to bring out the best in their members. But great organisations are apt to become deadening to the individual. And as religion is essentially a matter for the individual he will need the fullest possible freedom. Nor need there be hesitation in granting it to a truly religious person in touch with God, because though he may be free, he will yet be bound by his own nature. And if he be true to himself he would not be able to go

¹ *The Life Divine*, Vol II, p 1064

against it. Free though he may be it would not be possible for him to go against himself—to go against God. Only such organisations therefore as would be of downright help to the individual would be at all tolerable.

More likely is it that the religiously-disposed men and women of the future would shun great organisations and band themselves together in small groups of like-minded people round some religious leader acceptable to them. And each such group might well have its own self-governance and live a life of true mutuality happy with the happiness of men and women who have at last found themselves, and felt their whole natures fulfilled. Then such bands as felt affinity with one another would on occasion join together for combined action. And this method of association would be more fluid, flexible, and plastic than vast organisations with rigid rules and cramping customs. And rather than feeling cribbed and confined the individual member of each group would feel strengthened and encouraged by the presence of his fellows and the sense of working with them for God.

These and many other alternatives will open up before the newly illumined pair. But if they are to awaken the world to the joys which they have known they will have first tightly to secure the gains they have already made. Their rare experience they will have not merely to cherish in their minds as a sacred memory, nor let it just sink into them. If they want to be positive and active they will have deliberately to see to it that their experience is made to penetrate and suffuse their whole being till it permeates every cell and fibre, every nerve and tissue, and the Divine Presence lightens their every thought, actuates their every deed, and quickens their every emotion.

And though they will in fact have been raised by God on to a higher level of being and be standing on the next

step in the ladder of human progress yet they will have no wish to remain there in lonely grandeur far apart and aloof from the busy throng of men. They will have no wish to be ascetics. Like Jesus they will want to be going in and out among the people. What they have been greatly privileged to receive they will regard as a sacred trust. They will look upon themselves as instruments, as agents, even as partners of God in carrying out His deep purposes. Purified, refined and uplifted by the transmuting power of His grace, they will want now to change from the passive, the quiescent, the receptive to the forthgiving, the positive, and the active. Though before they attempt to consummate their joy in action they might well take one final pause and return once again into the solitude of their own souls and there fling wide the portals of their inmost sanctuary for God to enter in. Then in the silence His voice will be heard. They will intuitively see the right thing to do and the right way to do it.

And now indeed they may confidently fare forth on their great adventure—and fare forth full of fire. For now their fire will be under the firmest control. Their new activity will issue from the deepest centre of their being. It will be centred on God, and in all they do they will be fired by a sense of the oneness of men and of the oneness of men with God. So they will work with no other thought than how they can best serve God. And what they do will be done for the sake of the Divine in others and the Divine in all. With no wish for reward, even with no eye on the fruits of their labours, but solely from sheer joy in the doing and delight in creating will they gratefully work with God as partners in creation. That bliss Divine which comes from direct communion with God will transfigure all pain and evil, resolve all discords and transmute all into what surpasses them.

They will sing as they work Laughter will be on their lips and great gladness in their eyes. And mountains will melt before them

So will the pair become a radiant centre from which the light of heaven will shine around. They will form the nucleus of the cell which they will weave about them. That home will then radiate its influence in ever expanding circles. From it will stretch out filaments to other homes. Into it will enter filaments from these others. So will scores, and hundreds, and thousands, and millions of homes in every country, intertwine themselves with one another. A new world will arise from out of the ashes of the old. And the blessing of the Bliss Divine will rest for ever on it.

QUINTESSENCE

GOD AND SELF

As high above and beyond thee am I as a mother is high above and beyond the seed in her womb. But deep as is her very self in her seed so deep am I within thee And as she is ever working in and through her seed till it matureth into a babe, is born, and groweth in her own image and to her own stature, so am I ever working in and through thee till thou growest up in mine own image and to mine own stature

Vast as am I so vast mayest thou also be Great as am I so great mayest thou be Perfect as am I thy Father in heaven so perfect mayest thou likewise be

Be thou therefore perfect And whatsoever thy hand findeth to do that thing do to perfection

JOY AND LOVE

Love am I But also I am deep beneath the deepest love I am the deep down source from which all love springeth. I am the prime Begetter of love Joy is my name I am the joy every creator hath in creating I am that rapturous consummation of all joy from which Mother-Love itself arose.

Love am I But also I am high above love's highest flight, and vast I am as the azure of the firmament. I am that for which every lover longeth and every mother prayeth for her child I am that crown of happiness—that happiness without alloy—on which all lovers love to set their eyes.

Thus am I both the Source and End of Love.

Therefore, seek thou ever those heights of happiness which tower upward to the ecstasy of oneness with thy Creator. And then through the Light that will be in thee thou wilt have the power to banish the acutest pain, sweeten the bitterest sorrow, whiten the blackest sin, and draw all men unto Me

PRAYER AT WEDDING ¹

O GOD, Creator of all life that is upon the face of the earth, pour down the abundance of Thy blessing upon this woman and this man who by Thy grace have been brought together and who have now enterprised the state of matrimony and consented together in holy wedlock

As it is Thy wish that these two should be one flesh even as Thou hast already made them one spirit may their union of body knit them ever closer together in soul ;

May it continually bring them nearer to Thee as workers together with Thee for the creation of little children in Thine own image and for Thy Pleasure ,

And may the joy which nearness to Thee alway bringeth, and which was also in Christ Jesus, cause them and their children continually to praise and magnify Thy Holy Name now and for evermore

¹ Composed by me at the request of Philippa James and read at her wedding to Arthur Kingsbury

QUINTESSENCE

PRAYER AT CHRISTENING ¹

O GOD, Thou fountain source of all true happiness, from Whom this precious gift hath been vouchsafed unto us, replenish within her, we beseech Thee, such happiness as will sustain her through every affliction and draw her ever nearer to Thee.

Remembering how Jesus hath likened the Kingdom of Heaven unto a little child, we pray that Thy kingdom may daily increase within her. And may the joy that was in Christ Jesus remain in her, that her joy may be full, and out of its fulness flow forth on all around her

In great thankfulness do we ask these blessings of Thee, and asking know that we shall receive

Amen.

¹ Composed by me at the request of Mr and Mrs John Grey Murray and read by me at the Christening of their daughter Joanna, June 2nd, 1940

APPENDIX

(Literature Recommended)

FOR all that is concerned with the preparation for marriage voluntary organisations, like the Alliance of Honour and others mentioned in the text, publish a number of pamphlets and booklets and recommend books on the subject which might be consulted. And for the actual technique of the Marriage Act there are now several books written with scientific details, and one or other of these should certainly be consulted.

Sex Education in Schools by Theodore Tucker and Muriel Prout is recommended by the Alliance of Honour. *Christian Marriage and Modern Practice* by A. G. Pite, published by the Student Christian Movement is excellent. *Marriage and Parenthood* is a pamphlet published by the Society of Friends. There are many especially helpful pamphlets by the Rev. A. Herbert Gray. And there is a pamphlet by Dr. Marie Stopes on *Sex and Religion* showing that our sex life is our most direct link with the Divine life. Of Havelock Ellis's important works his *Little Essays of Love and Virtue* is the best adapted to the general reader.

Far more important than these books and pamphlets concerned more especially with the bodily union of a man and woman are those books concerned especially with the spirit in which a man and woman are drawn to each other. Therefore the great love stories and great love poems of the world might be read. There is a publication called *The Great Love Stories of All Nations* by Robert Lynd, which is well worth reading.

Of the present-day novels each will have to select for him or herself those which stimulates to the truest, purest love and distinguish them from those which however well-written merely excite and lead nowhere.

Biographies may also be studied. The one which most influenced myself personally was the life of Sir Henry Lawrence because it contained the story of the love of Henry and Honoria who afterwards became Sir Henry and Lady Lawrence, for both of whom my parents had the greatest admiration. The love story of the Brownings, and of Mr. and

Mrs Gladstone are also great instances of true and faithful love. And in all of these love and religion are combined.

More instructive and impressive than any books are the lives of boys and girls, of men and women, being lived out all round us to-day. Here successes and failures may be carefully studied and by them profit may be taken. Perhaps the deepest things about them may not be known in their lifetimes. But they will afford confirmation or correction to what is seen in plays and films and read in novels.

Concerning the philosophy of religion the two books of recent times that I have found most helpful are (1) Henri Bergson's *The Two Sources of Mortality and Religion*, and (2) Whitehead's *The Making of Religion*. Bergson has recently died and is sometimes spoken of as one of the greatest philosophers of all time, and this last book of his should be read as the culmination of his *Creative Evolution*, for the one is not complete without the other. Whitehead also is one of our greatest intellects and originally a mathematician. When two men of such acute minds, with all the achievements of modern science at their disposal, support religion it is absurd for materialists to toss it contemptuously aside.

As regards mysticism we have Dean Inge's and Evelyn Underhill's great studies in Christian Mysticism. But the book which most influenced me was Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness* containing examples of mystical experience from many lands and at many times. Of present-day mystics I have given examples in my *Modern Mystics*, which contains also my own views of the place of the mystical experience in my conception of the universe.

And even while I have been writing there has arrived from India a philosophical-religious work of the first importance, Aurobindo's *The Life Divine*, which I would specially recommend.

And now read

The Sum of Things

"A wise and moving book, quiet, refreshing, with a touch that the world needs."—*The Observer*.

"The record of an unusually devoted, exploring mind"—*The Times*.

Vital Religion

A Brotherhood of Faith

"In days when the religious atmosphere is sultry, the book has about it a quality which is a tonic, because it is open-aired. It is the faith of a long vision which can perceive within or beyond the encircling gloom"—*The Times*.

and

Dawn in India

"Should be studied by all of us who presume to have an opinion of India. A masterly book, deep in knowledge and in that which is better than knowledge"—F. YEATS BROWN in the *Spectator*

By Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Heart of a Continent

"This book has long been a classic of travel and we therefore rejoice that it is now once more made available. The book has gained rather than lost by time"—*Great Britain and the East*

Illustrations and a Map

Modern Mystics

"These explorers of the Spiritual Himalayas have added to our knowledge of the highest realities, and of the possible heights which human nature may reach"—*The Times*.

The Living Universe

"A fine and sensitive achievement in spiritual exploration."
—*The Times*

"A magnificent summing up of all the best thought on the future of mankind"—*Sunday Dispatch*

